

## **Governor's Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism**

September 29, 2015

Sheraton Roanoke Hotel

2801 Hersherberger Road, Roanoke VA 24017

**Board Members Present:** Lettie Bien, Jessica Bowser, Karen Stanley, Elizabeth Childress, Vanessa Diamond, Omari Faulkner, Mark Fero, Elsa Flores-Vazquez, Terry Frye, Ashley Hall, Seema Sethi, Rachel Thomas, Laurie Turner, Steven Valdez, Leah Walker, and Tynetta Darden.

**Staff Present:** Kim Brown, Demian Futterman, Gail Harris, Amanda Healy, Eva Hite, Fran Inge, Deneen Jackson, and Cathy Walker.

### **Advisory Board Meeting Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 4:10 p.m. by Board Chair Karen Stanley.

The meeting was held in the Botany Ballroom at the Sheraton Inn & Conference Center, Roanoke, VA. The Sheraton Roanoke was the location of the 2015 Virginia Volunteerism & Service Conference which followed the Board meeting on September 30 – October 1, 2015.

Karen Stanley welcomed the Board and the new Board Members.

### **Adoption of the Agenda**

A motion was made to adopt the agenda. The motion was properly seconded and passed.

### **Adoption of the May 28, 2015 minutes**

A motion was made to adopt the May 28, 2015 minutes. The motion was properly seconded and passed.

Then Karen asked for all Board Members and Staff to make introductions to the group.

### **Election of New Board Chair and Vice-Chair**

After introductions, Karen led the Board in electing new Chair and Vice-Chair. Mark Fero nominated Elizabeth Childress as Chair; the motion was seconded and approved.

Elizabeth Childress nominated Vanessa Diamond as Vice-Chair; the motion was seconded and approved. Ms. Childress then took over as Chair at the meeting.

### **Board Roles and Responsibilities for 2015-16**

#### **Board Handbook**

Gail Harris went over the new board handbook and the changes made to bring the handbook up to date. Gail touched on the content of the handbook and each section. She discussed the changes of the bylaws and she said that the bylaws will be voted on by the Board at the October 29<sup>th</sup> meeting. Gail talked about Board conflict of interest, the sub-committees and the definition of each committee. She noted the State Service Plan and that the Plan will be restructured next year. Gail discussed the State CNCS office and staff structure, and how our offices support each other. Tynetta Darden, Director at the Virginia State Office of the Corporation on National and Community Service (CNCS) spoke on the differences in CNCS programs such as VISTA and Senior Corps. She explained what the focus should be for each program. Gail noted where to find the list of AmeriCorps programs in Virginia in the handbook. Gail advised that the past minutes were also in the handbook and that the handbook included travel expense information.

#### Calendar of events and meeting dates

Gail then talked about the upcoming meetings. The next meeting will be October 29, 2015, (we will notify the Board when the location is finalized) February, April and then again in May. Gail briefly touched on special days that are recognized by AmeriCorps including Veteran's Day, MLK Day, Mayor's Day and September 11<sup>th</sup>. She also talked about the Governor's Volunteerism Awards and timeline, and invited the Board to participate in these special events.

#### The Governor's Higher Education Summit on National Service

Elizabeth Childress then introduced Fran Inge, Director of the Office on Community and Volunteer Services. Fran provided background on national efforts for getting young people into National Service, including The Franklin Project. She told the Board about the Governor's Higher Education Summit in Williamsburg Oct. 4-5, 2015. This is the first summit and it will be held at the College of William and Mary. All Board members are invited as are the members of the Virginia Service Foundation. Both entities are serving as financial sponsors for the event. Virginia's First Lady Dorothy McAuliffe will lead the Summit. There will be a College President Panel and an AmeriCorps Alumni Panel on which Vanessa Diamond will be sitting. Three AmeriCorps programs will present: VCU, UVA, and Emory & Henry College. The Summit will cover the different service programs that Virginia colleges have and possibilities of expanding National Service. She said another meeting is planned for February 2016 at James Madison University.

Gail Harris added that the Board will be updated on the Summit at the October Board Meeting. Several Board Members will be attending the Summit

#### Bylaw Revisions

Liz Childress continued to the subject of revisions of the Bylaws. She stated the changes are due to the Codification of the Board. Revisions will be considered for approval in October.

#### AmeriCorps Updates

##### Current Programs

Next the Board heard AmeriCorps updates from Amanda Healy. She talked about the last Board meeting and the funding presentation made to the Board. Amanda reported that upon the Board's approval of the recommendations for funding, 1.2 million dollars was awarded to formula programs; \$500,000 was awarded to competitive programs that competed nationally for Federal funds. Additionally, an award of \$250,000 from the Volunteer Generation Fund VGF was allocated to four of our programs. With matched funds and education awards, roughly 7-8 million dollars was awarded to 23 programs across the Commonwealth of Virginia. Amanda stated we still have work to do for better state-wide program coverage, but our AmeriCorps programs have good coverage throughout the state.

##### Upcoming Processes and Activities

Amanda then discussed the release the upcoming AmeriCorps RFP. This will bring in some new programs and some re-competes, with a 3 year cycle for successful programs. The review team is always looking for new programs. The review team is looking for capacity, a sound footprint in the area, and specific focus areas. She listed the 6 focus areas. We will be submitting competitive and formula packages. The amount of funds for the new grant cycle is still unknown, but we should have that information soon. She went over the process of reviewing proposals, and hopes to have strong programs to put forward for competition to CNCS.

##### Status of CNCS Funding

Gail Harris informed the Board that the current program funding goes through to next summer and that our administrative support, including our staff, is funded until January. Our office will forward information to the Board as it comes into our office.

A question was raised on how the Board can support funding and what Board Members can do to help support the programs. Gail Harris responded that the Board can contact their State and local Representatives, write editorials, and show support through networking. She said Karen Schultz (former Board Member) wrote editorials and would be glad to share ideas and formats. Gail will notify the Board on opportunities for supporting the Corporation and the Commission. Terry Frye talked about his experience lobbying for funds. He said he'd love to show support in that way. Rachel Tomas asked if the Federal Government were to shutdown would funding be stopped. Gail answered that the current funding is in place but with an extended shutdown the money would be dispersed in smaller amounts over time.

Another question was asked was how the review process works. Amanda said that the dates to know will be in the RFP. She talked about the review panels. Staff and Board Members will review proposals and rate programs based largely on their impact, community needs and services, and financial stability. Amanda talked about the Commission funds, which is our administrative budget.

### Strategic Planning

Gail then went over strategic planning for AmeriCorps programs supported by CNCS funds through the Office on Volunteerism and Community Service. She went over the summary in the Board packets and reviewed the in-depth process that the AmeriCorps team had engaged in for strategic planning. She said AmeriCorps regulations are very detailed and heavy reporting is required. One observation made was that Program Officers are very deep in minor details. She said staff looked at processes and ways to better use our time to allow for more outreach, collaboration, technical assistance, etc. The strategic planning also looked at geographical coverage and determined that areas of Virginia with higher community needs should be targeted. Another strategic goal is to fund larger, more stable programs which could be intermediary organizations for AmeriCorps members – placing them in several different agencies. There was discussion on the added emphasis to three of the CNCS focus areas. The priority areas for Virginia are education, economic development, and Veterans services. A percentage of funds (e.g. 25%) will be set aside for all other types of service. A Board member asked whether priorities would change annual and that this could be disruptive to programs. Gail said our grant cycle is three years and that these three priorities have really been present in Virginia for a long time and would likely remain so. When asked the reasoning behind the 3 focus areas, Gail indicated that they were chosen based on community indicator data, research on community impact and historical trends of AmeriCorps funding. In response to a Board member's question, Amanda noted that there is a definition in the AmeriCorps regulations for "veterans". She read the performance indicator on veterans and what the definition is for AmeriCorps programing purposes.

Gail went on to say that AmeriCorps programs have not had a clear direction on how long the programs can keep getting AmeriCorps funds. If the same programs keep reapplying and getting funded, then there is no room for new programs to be considered. We end up with a closed system rather than an open and responsive one. We want to encourage programs to grow out of these funds by achieving funding at the Competitive CNCS status or through continued increase of the match requirement. There may need to be a term limit or at least expectations that AmeriCorps programs grow. There was some concern voiced that some programs may not be in a position to grow or change and that limiting their funding term would hurt the program. It was explained that funds are not granted for an indefinite period but rather for a three-year cycle. Successful programs may re-compete after the 3 years.

There was concern voiced from a Member that the southwest part of Virginia is underserved as a whole. Gail said we would be happy to have more coverage in that part of the Commonwealth. Programs/non-profits are encouraged to apply for funding, but they have to be strong programs – AmeriCorps required a very high level of reporting, detailed monitoring and strong financial standing in order to be successful. It was noted that all four of our VGF (Volunteer Generation Fund) funded programs are in the southwest part of the State. We

expect all of our programs to work on volunteer recruitment. Amanda Healy explained the formula guidelines on volunteers. The idea is that when funding goes away, the volunteers will help with sustaining the programs.

### **2015 Virginia Conference on Volunteerism and Service**

Gail then went over the conference schedule. She said staff has worked hard to make this a great conference, with a focus on capacity building and education in addition to volunteerism. She went over the "Schedule-at-Glance" and specific roles for the Board. Registration begins at 8:00 a.m. on September 30<sup>th</sup>. About 350 attendees have signed up for the Conference Service Projects. Some of the service projects include card making for sick children; Thank-A-Vet project to collect toiletry items for Veterans at the Veterans Hospital in Salem, Virginia; and rebuilding projects in the Roanoke area.

Gail went over the Board Member's duties during the Conference. She went over travel reimbursement for the Board. She advised that the board will get the same reimbursement as state employees. Travel reimbursement requests will be processed when staff gets back to the office on October 2, 2015.

### **Public Comment Period**

#### Virginia Service Foundation Report

Mark Fero reported from the Virginia Service Foundation. He went over the Robert E. Wone award that will be awarded to a 2<sup>nd</sup> year AmeriCorps Service Member. Mark stated that the Foundation's mission is in alignment with the Governor's Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism. Mark also noted the Foundation co-hosts the Virginia Service Conference with the Virginia Department of Social Services, Office on Volunteerism and Community Service.

### **Committee Meetings**

Liz Childress then announced the meeting of the Sub-committees. A chart with Board Member sub-committee assignments was included in the Board Meeting packet. The meeting then broke for brief sub-committee meetings to elect new Chair and Vice-chair for each sub-committee. After the sub-committee meetings, the Board came back and the Sub-committees announced the newly elected officers.

#### Program Committee Report:

The Program Committee elected Vanessa Diamond to continue as Chair and Ashley Hall to continue as Vice-chair.

#### Service and Outreach Committee Report:

The Service and Outreach Committee elected Steven Valdez as Chair and Elsa Vasquez-Flores as Vice Chair.

#### Communication Committee Report:

The Communication Committee elected Laurie Turner as Chair and Rachel Thomas as Vice-Chair.

### **Adjourn**

Terry Frye then moved to adjourn. The motion was properly seconded and approved. The meeting was adjourned at 6:07 p.m.

esh